

Sixth Grade Earth & Space Science

Syllabus



Mrs. Lauren Watson

2011/2012

Hello! Welcome to 6th grade Earth & Space Science. Scientific Inquiry is a fancy way of describing how scientists find answers to questions about the world around us. Scientific inquiry begins when you ask questions. It continues as you look for answers to these questions. Have you ever thought about what the moon's surface is like, why rocks have different colors and textures, or how birds and airplanes can fly? If so, you have thought about science.

What is the goal of science? To answer questions about the natural world, our world, the one we live in. This year we will be covering concepts of the atmosphere, climate and oceans, shaping the earth, earth and space. Sixth grade science is a great class and I look forward to sharing my passion and enthusiasm for science with all of you.

Objectives:

Students will demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary for the study of science methodology and applications of the scientific method.

Materials:

Students will need to bring to class:

- **Agenda book:** write down daily homework, projects, tests, quizzes, etc.
- **4 Duotang folders (with prongs):** Teacher will explain how they are to be used.
- **Pencils or pens:** at least 2 (if you have a sharpener, that's great).
- **2 Composition Notebooks:** 1 for science fair, and second for class notes, foldables, etc.
- **Students will be expected to have ALL of the supplies on the 6th grade mandatory supply list at ALL times.**

Textbook: Online textbook is available at <http://connected.mcgraw-hill.com/>. Students will receive their user name and password in class. A copy of the log-in, along with user names and passwords will be glued in the front of their class notebooks, as well as posted on Edline.

Class Materials: All classroom materials are to be treated with respect and maintained in good condition. Students may not leave their own materials in the desks. Desk area/cubbies are used by all classes and expected to remain clean and tidy.

Bellwork:

Students will start on bellwork as soon as they walk into class, and will have a minimum of 5 minutes to complete this exercise. Bellwork is not optional.

Order of Unit Progression for the 2011-2012 School Year:

The following is an outline of those areas that will be studied this year. You will note that the first area, dealing with **Science Fair**, has definite assignments and due dates, while the other areas do not list assignments. Please note that we will cover the regular science units during the times we are not directly working in class on the science fair. Those units will have little to no homework. It is expected that during the science fair preparation time (roughly the first semester) the student's science fair project is their homework!

Science Fair- Every student at SSA+S is required to do a science fair project. The science fair project is a lengthy project spanned over 13 weeks in the beginning of the school year. The processes and due dates are split in increments so students can focus on one part at a time and the project will not be so overwhelming. This project will also be graded in increments so different components will be assigned and due at separate times with the whole project being due at the end of the 13 week period.

The science fair project is a large part of the student's grade and cannot be done the night before it is due. Even if turned only at the very end, the student will not receive credit for the dead lines of the components. Please make sure you and your parents are fully aware of the due dates to the different parts of the project and keep up with each assignment. Failure to turn in parts of the project on time will result in a lower grade, if not a zero for not completing the assignment. I have attached a copy of the Science Fair due date timeline at the end of the syllabus. (See attached Science Fair Due Date Timeline).

Units of Study

Please note that students are given study guides for each test given. These study guides will, in the beginning, be complete guides, they will not need a book to study with. Later in the second half of the year, students will be given study guides that may contain areas they will need to answer to complete. Use the study guide from the textbook. These study guides then become their complete study guide needs.

First Quarter:

- *The Nature of Science
- *Earth's Structure
- *Minerals & Rocks
- *Weathering & Soil
- *Erosion & Deposition

Second Quarter:

- *Erosion & Deposition
- *Plate Tectonics
- *Earth Dynamics
- *Earthquakes & Volcanoes

Third Quarter:

- *Clues to Earth's Past & Geologic Time
- *Weather
- *Climate
- *Earth's Water
- *Oceans

Fourth Quarter:

- *Exploring Space
- *The Sun-Earth-Moon System
- *The Solar System
- *Stars & Galaxies

Grading:

1. Grading Scale

A = 100% - 90%

B = 89% - 80%

C = 79% - 70%

D = 69% - 60%

F = 59% and below

Grades

35% - Tests/Projects

30% - Quizzes

30% - Classwork / Homework / Labs

5% - Bellwork

2. **Assignments:** Assignments are due at the BEGINNING of class. Assignments should be out and ready to either turn-in or grade using colored pen/pencil when the bell rings. Assignments that are still being worked on after the bell (on the due date) will be considered late.

Work that is started in class (also referred to as ‘classwork’), but was not completed in class either because of time or students not being on task, will be assigned as homework, and is expected to be completed for the next day’s class.

3. **Late Work:** Assignments are due on the due date at the BEGINNING of class. Late assignments will only receive partial credit. (Remember, some credit is better than NO credit). Work may not be made up after 2 weeks of missing the assignment, except when an extensive absence from class occurs with parent/guardian notification. In order to allow sufficient time for grading, NO late work will be accepted the last week before the end of the grading quarter. Any assignments still not received will remain as zeros.

Late Projects: Major projects and reports will receive a one-letter grade deduction for every day it is late. If you are absent on the day a project is due, it is required to be turned in on the day you return in order to receive full credit. If at all possible please try and have your project in by the date it is due, projects may be turned in early, emailed to the teacher or brought in by another student for the student who is out. If you know you will be out on a day a project is due, please see the teacher to make arrangements.

4. **Make-up Work:** This is *your* responsibility! **If you are absent you will have the number of days you were absent plus one additional day to make up work**.** Check Edline when you are feeling better to look for class notes, worksheets, study guides, or project information. When you return to school you should follow these procedures:

- i. Check with your teammates (and/or calendar) for assignments you missed.
- ii. Check the folders for any worksheets/notes (many assignments are also available on Edline).
- iii. If you need further assistance or directions, please see the teacher.

1. **Missed labs:** Missing a lab, does not mean that you are exempt from it! You are still accountable for the work you missed. Some missed labs can be completed at home or with the assistance of the team’s data (this does not mean that you may “copy” the team’s lab, only the *collected data/observations* may be used). Other labs cannot be made up due to their nature and will require an alternative assignment in order to receive credit. The lab alternative will be determined by the teacher.

iv. Mark all make-up work as “Make-up Work” and make sure that your paper has the proper heading and topic. Be sure to include the **date(s)** you were absent.

****Major projects, papers, and all tests are due the day you return.**

5. **Extra Copies/Lost papers:** It is the student’s responsibility to acquire any missing/lost work. All extra copies for the current topic are available from the “extra copies” folder and most are also available on Edline. Extra copies of assignments are available in class up until the test on that topic.
6. **Extra Credit:** As occasions arise, extra credit opportunities may become available. These opportunities will be announced in class, posted in the classroom and/or posted on Edline. All extra credit assignments will be at the teacher’s discretion. Extra credit is not given on an individual basis, so students/parents should not request this from the teacher. Extra credit is not a replacement for missing or incomplete work, so the best way to improve grades is by staying on track with assignments and quizzes/tests.
7. **Cheating:** Cheating in any form will NOT be tolerated and will result in zero credit for that assignment and a detention. This includes copying another person’s work. When using the in-class response system (clickers), students may not discuss or share their answers with classmates (unless instructed otherwise); obtaining or sharing answers is a form of cheating.
8. **Labs:** Students are expected to follow ALL school, classroom, and lab safety rules/procedures during a lab. **ABSOLUTELY NO HORSEPLAY IS PERMITTED.** Students that do not follow procedures during a lab will be removed from the lab and will have to write the lab safety rules (to be signed by a parent) as a consequence. Students will still be expected to make up that portion of the lab or may be assigned an alternative assignment (at teacher’s discretion). As a result, the student will not earn higher than a C on their lab.
9. **Quizzes:** Will occur from time to time and will be based on the current material being taught. Pop-quizzes can (and will) occur at any time.
10. **Testing:** It is important that you have sufficient time and a quiet space to take a test or quiz. It is also important that you study and that you come into a testing situation **PREPARED**. To help you during testing it will be important for you to follow the following steps:
 1. *Get a good night’s sleep, and eat a good breakfast.*
 2. *Begin your test when the teacher tells you to start.*
 3. *If something is missing or unclear on the test, ask the teacher for further clarification, do not ask your neighbor.*
 4. *Keep your eyes on your own paper at all times.*
 5. *Remember that talking during a test is considering cheating.*
 6. *When you finish your test, follow the teachers instructions for turning it in, then you may read quietly for the remainder of the class period.*
 - All tests that earn below a 70% must be signed by a parent and returned to the teacher. Students who earn below a 60% on a test have the opportunity to improve their score if they:
 - a. Return the test signed by a parent.
 - b. Turn in the completed/corrected study guide with a parent signature.
 - c. Re-take the test and earn a higher grade, up to a C. This must be arranged **ahead** of time with the teacher to avoid taking away from class time.

- If you are not in class the day of a test, that test is to be made up the day you return to class. If you know you will be out ahead of time, please schedule a time to take the test.

Absences

When a student is absent from class, it is the **student's responsibility** to get the make-up work and/or assignments from the make-up work bin in class or from Mrs. Watson.

Field Trips

Students are expected to be on their absolute best behavior while on field trips. Any discipline issue on a field trip will result in a county referral. Field Trip information can be found in 6th Grade Team News, Edline, or a field trip information sheet sent home with the student 5-7 days prior to the field trip. If any parents are interested in chaperoning for volunteer hours, please contact me at LaurenWatson@ssas.org.

Tip for Success

There are many ways to improve your chance of success in this course:

1. Attend class every day.
2. Do your homework as quickly after class as possible, study it, understand it, and keep it organized.
3. Read your textbook and make notes of areas you do not understand.
4. Ask questions of your teacher in and out of class.
5. Form a study group or get a "study buddy".
6. **DO NOT DELAY SEEKING HELP WHEN NEEDED!**

Contacting the teacher:

The best way to contact Mrs. Watson is via e-mail at LaurenWatson@ssas.org. If a student or parent sends an e-mail, a response will usually get back to them within 24 hours, unless the teacher is absent from school. Phone calls and email will not be answered on the weekends or during school breaks. So, please do not be offended if an email is sent on a Friday, you will not receive a response until Monday.

Parents may also contact Mrs. Watson by calling the school and leaving a message (330-1855 x120). Please keep be aware that calls will most likely not be returned during school hours. If you leave a voicemail message, please leave the best telephone number to contact you on and the best time to call you during the evening. To request a parent conference, please contact the teacher to schedule a date and time.

Syllabus is subject to change
Science Fair Due Date Timeline:

Assignment	Assignment Description	Suggested Time to Complete this Step	Due Date
Topic Checklist	Students research topics and narrow it down. They submit the topic checklist with parent and student signatures.	14 days	9/2/11
Problem Statement/Question	The specific question the student will be investigating in the project.	7 days	9/9/11
Research Index Cards & 3 Sources	The Research Index Cards are used to guide you in doing background research. You should have all bibliographic information for each of the 3 (or more) sources of information (author, date, publisher, website, etc.). Your teacher will go over with you what they require for this assignment.	7 days	9/16/11
Variables and Hypothesis	Variables are the factors that will be changed during the experiment (includes IV, DV, and CVs). The hypothesis is a one-sentence statement that predicts the outcome of the experiment.	3 days	9/23/11
Background Research Paper & Bibliography	The purpose of the Background Research Paper is to provide information to help understand why the experiment turns out the way it does. The bibliography is the list of information sources in MLA format.	12 days	9/28/11
Materials and Procedures	A detailed list of the materials that will be used to conduct the experiment and the detailed steps that will be followed during experiment.	7 days	10/4/11 & receive forms
Forms & Research Plan	Completed ISEF Forms and Research Plan (includes Problem Statement, Hypothesis, Materials & Procedures, Bibliography).	7 days	10/11/11
Conducting the Experiment	This is the period of time that students are actually doing their experiment and collecting data. Minimum of 3 trials. If students are working with plants, they should have 3 plants for each variable tested.	14 days	10/12/11 – 10/28/11
Data Analysis and Graphs	The analysis of the experimental data. A summary of the findings of the experiment in graph form.	7 days	11/4/11
Conclusions	An explanation of the results of the experiment.	7 days	11/11/11
Abstract	A 250 word description of the entire experiment.	2 days	11/14/11
Final Project (Report, Display Board, & Log Book)	The final report includes all written elements of project submitted as a final report. Display board, Final Report in Folder, and Log Book are all turned in.	3 days	11/16/11
School Science Fair	The date of the SSA+S Science Fair.		11/29/11
County Science Fair	The date of the Sarasota County Science Fair.		TBA

Mrs. Watson's Classroom Rules & Discipline Plan

Classroom Rules:

1. Respect others; this means keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself, and respect the possessions of others.
2. Participate in all activities to the best of your abilities.
3. Listen to instructions the first time they are given.
4. Do not use vulgar or offensive language. There is no name calling in this class.
5. Listen to your classmates when they are addressing the class.

If You Choose to Break a Rule:

First Offense:

Visual (The Look) or Verbal Warning

Second Offense:

Complete the *Second Warning Copy and Reflection sheet*.

Third Offense:

Behavior Essay with signature from parent (s). Failure to complete and return the *Behavior Contract Essay* sheet the next day with parent/guardian signature will result in a detention.

Fourth Offense:

In school morning detention.

Fifth offense:

County referral (One or more days out of school suspension)

Student or parent refusal for student to write classroom rules or behavior essay, and also a refusal to do a morning detention will be considered to be a fifth offense.

If an offense, at the discretion of the teacher, is severe enough, the first two steps can be omitted resulting in the third step, or fourth step.

Students are not permitted to "tell" the teacher how the discipline plan should be administered.

Rewards

Praise (daily)

Positive notes home (random)

Happy teacher and therefore, happy students.

Various other positive perks (throughout the school year)

Syllabus

*SSA+S Student agenda book is something both student and parent/guardian need to read together at the start of the school year. The SSA+S Student agenda book is a guide for both student and parent/guardian of SSA+S's expectations for your student's success during the 2011-12 year.

Please read/review the 6th Grade Earth & Space Science Syllabus 2011-12 with your student. Use the syllabus as your guide for this school year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lauren Watson

Students are to return this page signed by Wednesday, August 24, 2011.

We (student and parent/guardian) have read and understand the 6th grade science syllabus.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Contact information:

1. _____ at _____ Best time to call: _____
(Name) (telephone number)
Email address: _____

2. _____ at _____ Best time to all: _____
(Name) (telephone number)
Email address: _____